



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Railroad
Administration**

Ms. Carol Gomez
Planning and Rules Manager
Southern CA Air Quality Management District
21865 East Copley Drive
Diamond Bar, CA 91765-4182

Dear Ms. Gomez,

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has initiated the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) for a proposal by a private railroad corporation (DesertXpress Enterprises LLC) to construct and operate a new passenger railroad from Victorville, California to Las Vegas, Nevada. The railroad would extend nearly 200 miles on high-speed double track with no at-grade highway crossings. The high speed trains would travel between Victorville and Las Vegas in under 1 hour and 45 minutes. Proposed alignments under consideration roughly follow Interstate 15. A graphic illustrating proposed alignment options is enclosed.

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, FRA is serving as the lead Federal agency and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Surface Transportation Board (STB), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are cooperating agencies for the preparation of the EIS. The FRA has retained the services of the consulting firm CirclePoint of San Francisco to assist in preparing the EIS for this project.

FRA has initiated consultation with numerous federal and state agencies, including Caltrans, NDOT, the California Department of Fish and Game, the Nevada Department of Wildlife, and others. FRA will also be consulting with the State Historic Preservation Officers in both California and Nevada. BLM and FRA have also formally initiated consultation with Native American Tribes as required under NEPA and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

The purpose of this letter is to invite your participation in the preparation of the EIS. The FRA recognizes that state and local agencies will have special expertise that will be useful to the preparation of the EIS. Such consultation and input is considered valuable and will be given consideration throughout preparation of the EIS. While Desert Express Enterprises Inc. applied for and STB issued a declaratory order on June 25, 2007, finding that the project is exempt from state and local land use and environmental laws, there is the opportunity for state and local agencies to participate in the NEPA process for the proposed project and potential alternatives.

If your agency is interested in participating in this NEPA process, FRA would like to offer to have CirclePoint, FRA's designated third party consultant in charge of preparing the EIS, meet with representatives of your agency at a mutually convenient time and location. Please contact me to initiate consultation or to raise any questions you might have about the environmental review.

Sincerely,

David Valenstein
Environmental Program Manager
(202) 493-6368

Enclosure

cc: BLM, FHWA, STB

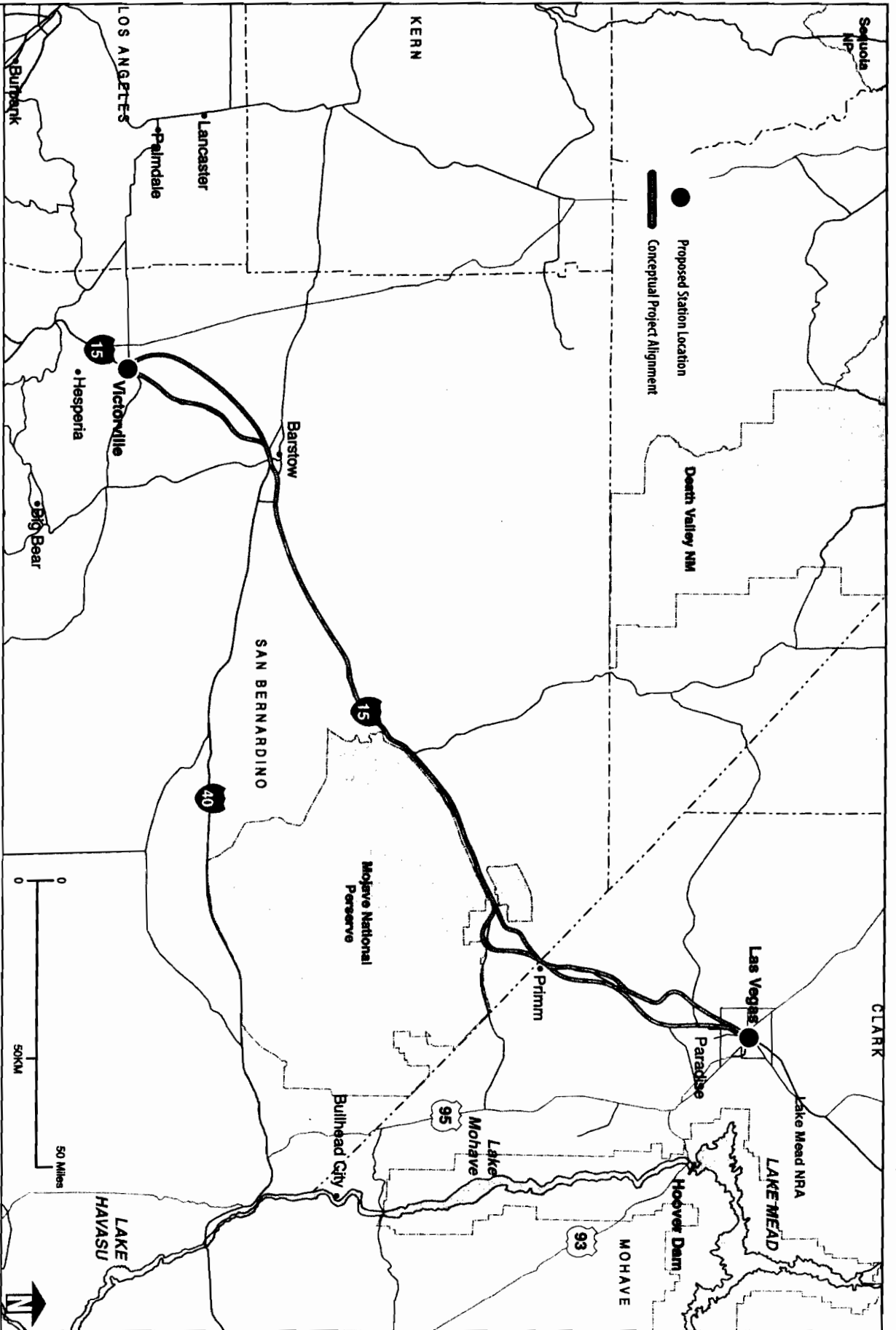
EI - 6744

CG

1120 Vermont Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

August 17, 2007

EP 660



CirclePoint™
The whole view.

DESERTXPRESS
Project Location